



Transport Delivery Committee

Date	9 January 2023
Report title	Swift Programme Update
Portfolio Holder	Transport - Councillor Ian Ward
Accountable TfWM Director	Anne Shaw, Executive Director, Transport for West Midlands E-mail: Anne.Shaw@tfwm.org.uk
Accountable Employee	Matt Lewis, Technical Director – Swift E-mail: Matthew.Lewis@tfwm.org.uk
Report has been considered by	N/A

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The West Midlands Transport Delivery Committee is recommended to:

- (1) Note the progress made towards the delivery of the Swift Programme.
- (2) Welcome the increase in both growth of Swift usage and customer satisfaction.

1. Purpose

The Purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Swift Programme detailing recent growth in usage and satisfaction and setting out recently delivered projects and those currently in the delivery phase.

2. Background

- 2.1 Having launched in 2012 as a Pay-as-you-go scheme, Swift is now a decade old and the largest and most comprehensive smartcard scheme in the UK outside of London with c. 250k regular users making c. 50m journeys per annum on buses, trains, and trams. Swift

has moved significantly beyond a Pay-as-you-go offer with season tickets, carnets and now Swift Go, the automatic capping solution on bus and tram meaning there is a Swift product for all users.

- 2.2 This paper sets out a general update on Swift progress, including recent project delivery and an update on inflight projects.

3 Key Project Delivery - 2022

Swift Go Enhancements

- 3.1 Swift Go is the regions 'best-value' capping solution offering 1 day, 3 day and 1-week caps for bus and tram meaning customers no longer need to understand the hugely complex ticketing offer as Swift Go works out the best fare automatically.
- 3.2 During 2022 the Swift Team has delivered projects that enable customers to top-up their Swift Go accounts at over 1,000 Payzone agents across the region and at Swift vending machines. This means that everyone can access the benefits of Swift Go, included those that are reliant on using cash. The popularity of Swift Go is increasing exponentially with over 10,000 1-week caps reached – this with very little marketing.
- 3.3 The team have also done significant work on the rollout of Swift Go for children which is currently in testing and should therefore be released early in the new year. Once rolled out for children, the team would have delivered a scheme that eclipses the Oystercard in London, other than it is not yet available on rail – see 'Swift on Rail' update below for latest position on this.

TfWM App

- 3.4 In early 2022, the Swift team delivered the TfWM App following an initial beta stage in 2021. This, for the first time, brought together all of the tools that a customer needs to use public transport, into a single App. This including ticketing finding, ticket purchase, ticket validation, journey planning, real time information, cycle hire integration and account management. The team also delivered additional functionality during the summer to replicate features within the old NWM App as it came to end of life – this enabled the closed down of that old App.
- 3.5 Due to the age of the NWM App, it was not possible to provide in-app messaging to inform customers directly that the App was closing. In recognition on this the Swift team delivered a comprehensive information campaign through social media, at key interchanges, and through email where accounts were known. Despite this a number of users were left uninformed and as such this created some negativity upon closedown.
- 3.6 Furthermore, issues with the Real Time Information feed, amplified by poor bus service performance due to driver shortages has meant that often the data provided is less accurate than we would like. TfWM is working hard with its Real Time Information service providers and National Express to deliver improvements to this feed.
- 3.7 Despite the challenging closedown of the NWM App and the issues with Real Time Information, the TfWM App has proven very popular with over 90k downloads to date.

Metro Zonal Updates

3.8 West Midlands Metro changed its fares structure in the summer of 2022 to introduce zones that enables it to sell cheaper season tickets. The Swift team has updated software on the handheld device used by Customer Service Representatives on-vehicle, updated back-office software so that Swift Go incorporates the new fares structure for capping, and updated all retail points including Payzone so that all customers, including those using cash can benefit from the changes.

4 Inflight Projects

cEMV Contactless Payment

4.1 In recent years, TfWM has done significant work to enable the acceptance of bankcard on public transport and currently all bus operators and the Metro will allow you to pay for your ticket on-vehicle using your bankcard. However, due to limitation with secure data exchange, customers cannot benefit from 'best value' capping when using their bankcard on multiple operators' services and, worst still, in some cases they will be over charged.

4.2 TfWM working with Midlands Connect and more recently with the Project Coral Team¹ have spent significant time and effort in designing a solution for this issue. The solution is now set out in detailed requirements which have been market tested and through CRSTS, the funding is available to deliver. Procurement will begin in early 2023 with delivery expected by late 2024. At this stage, TfWM will have a ticketing solution that is better than London's. Furthermore, working closely with DfT and the Project Coral team we will roll out the solution delivered in the West Midlands to the rest of the UK. The West Midlands is the recognised leader on smart ticketing outside London and this is one of two projects that we are leading where we will be the springboard for national solutions.

Buy Before you Board

4.3 During 2022, TfWM working with West Midlands Metro has completed a procurement exercise that will transform the ticketing solution on tram. Currently at the contract sign off stage, the successful supplier will begin delivery in the new year. This will see platform validators and ticket vending machines at trams stops with customers purchasing their fares before they board the tram. This will deliver a better experience for customers whilst ensuring that West Midlands Metro collects more revenue.

4.4 Customers will be able to use their Swift card (including Swift Go), their bankcard and barcodes tapping in and out using validators with 'best value' capping applied. Those reliant on cash can purchase barcode tickets from the vending machines or top-up their Swift account at over 1,000 Payzone outlets meaning no one is left behind.

4.5 Project completion is expected during the autumn of 2023.

Swift on Rail

4.6 The biggest gap for Swift has always been acceptance on the railway. Whilst we have c. 35k regular customers using their Swift card to access rail services, these are mainly customers of our direct debit scheme. Rollout of other ticket types has been prevented due to a lack of updated retail solutions and no hardware at stations.

¹ Project Coral is a collection of Bus Operators who have been working to resolve the contactless payment problem described above.

- 4.7 The Swift on Rail programme will see the rollout of a new retail solution and the installation of platform validators at every station in the WMRE area. This will mean people can purchase their rail tickets through Swift at every station and, using the new validators, we can begin to rollout Swift Go onto the rail network.
- 4.8 Whilst the validator rollout provides us with the opportunity to deliver Swift Go capping onto rail, it should be recognised that there is significant additional work to do before it can be launched. This includes a bespoke integration with the Rail Delivery Groups (RDG) Central Back Office (CBO) which will be the first of its kind, and ticketing reform to provide us with appropriate ticket types to cap to – for example there is currently no day ticket for rail only journeys.
- 4.9 TfWM is working with DfT, RDG, WMRE, West Midlands Trains and the Great British Rail Transition Team to deliver this project and again, it is hoped that delivery in the West Midlands will provide a springboard for the rest of the UK. We are currently in the design stage with detailed planning expected in early 2023.

5 Swift & BSIP

- 5.1 Through its Bus Service Improvement Plan bid, TfWM has been awarded £88m. £57.5m of that funding is being spent on the following fares and payments initiatives:

Fares Freeze

- 5.2 TfWM already has some of the lowest bus fares in the UK and with £18.5m of the BSIP funding fares will be frozen until 2025.

Passenger Incentive Programme

- 5.3 TfWM has £35m to target new users, lapsed users and those who have found accessing public transport a challenge – this group includes care leavers, NEETS, refugees, and people volunteering in the charity sector.
- 5.4 This transformational programme should stimulate significant and sustained growth in bus usage.

Bonfire of Bus Tickets

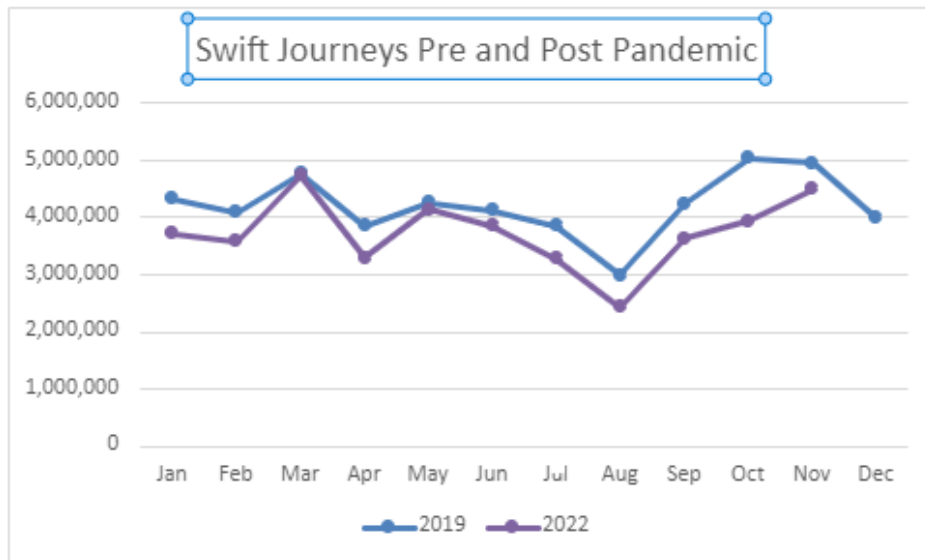
- 5.5 Through our Enhanced Partnership we will be radically simplifying the ticketing offer moving from c. 3000 ticketing choices to c. 12. All tickets will be accepted on all operators' services and for the first time, we will be able to advertise the price of tickets at all our bus stops.

Promotion

- 5.6 Through the BSIP we have also secured £4m for administration, technical development, and promotion – a minimum of £3.5m of this funding will go on promoting these schemes – this will also be transformational.

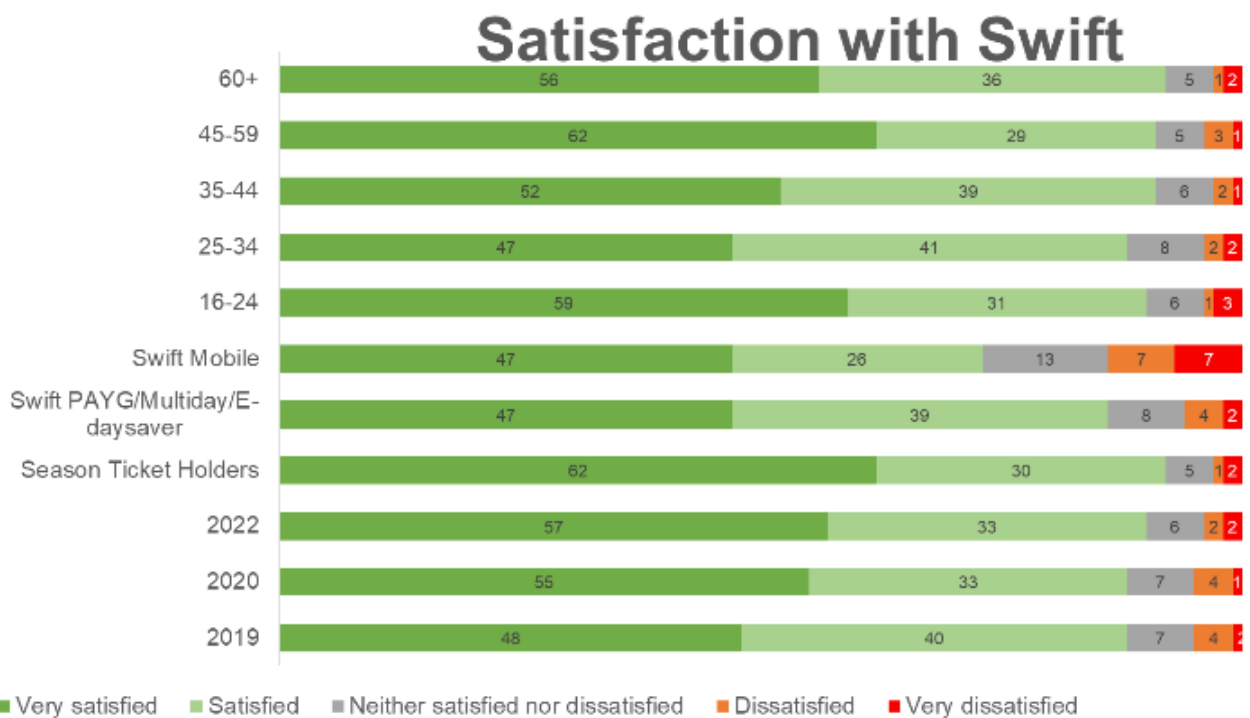
6 Swift Stats

- 6.1 Swift is an increasing success with more and more people moving to contactless solutions in recent years. Prior to the pandemic, Swift represented c. 1 in 4 public transport journeys, this has now increased to c. 1 in 3. Furthermore, as can be seen in the graph below, Swift journeys have bounced back strongly and continue to grow.



6.2 Swift journeys are at 91% of pre-pandemic levels which is higher than the total journey recovery on each of the three main modes.

6.3 As a further reinforcement of success and popularity of Swift, the latest Customer Satisfaction results show record satisfaction levels at 90% which up from 88% in 2021.



7. Financial Implications

7.1 There are no financial implications arising out of the recommendations within this report.

8. Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising out of the recommendations within this report.

9. Equalities Implications

9.1 There are no equalities implications arising out of the recommendations within this report.

10. Inclusive Growth

10.1 There are no inclusive growth implication arising out of the recommendations within this report.

11. Geographic Area of Reports Implications

11.1 There are no geographic area implications arising out of the recommendations within this report.

12. Other Implications

12.1 There are no other implications arising out of the recommendations within this report.

13. Schedule of Background Papers

13.1 None.